

INVISIBLE MOTHERS

Mary Savage

KEY PASSAGES

- Amy Denver to Sethe (94)
"She don't know nothing, just like you. You don't know a thing"
- Sethe's Stream of Consciousness (239-240)
"I wouldn't breathe without my children"
- Paul D reflecting on Sethe's price being greater than his
"--her price was greater than his; property that reproduced itself without cost" (269)



THE ISSUE

A key part of *Beloved* was the love of a mother for her children. Sethe loved her children so much she was prepared to do anything to protect them from the horrors she endured. Years of this inter-generational trauma along with bias and racism in the medical community are putting black mothers and their children at risk.

- Black women are ignored or talked down to when they are pregnant and feel something is wrong.
- Black women are more likely to report unfair treatment and discrimination in the healthcare system than other women.
- "Obstetrical and gynecological hardiness" is a false belief, rooted in racism, that has led black women to become invisible in the healthcare system
- Black women are three to four times more likely to die of pregnancy-related complications than white women
- Black women disproportionately account for a large number of maternal deaths in the United States.
- There is a lack of trust of doctors passed down generationally from the legacy of black women being forcefully sterilized.

CONCLUSION

Sethe had no control over her body. She was belittled and told she knew nothing even about her own body. Much like black women are told now. Many women have lost their life or their child due to being ignored. Some have lost both. Changes need to be made in the healthcare industry to protect the lives of black mothers and their children.



SUGGESTED READINGS & WORKS CITED

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